



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations

Date: September 13, 2013

To: Council Vice President Robert Lilligren and Chair Elizabeth Glidden
Referral to: Committee of the Whole/IGR

Subject: Federal, State, Local Update

Recommendation: Receive and File

Department Information

Prepared by: IGR Staff

Approved by: Gene Ranieri, IGR Director _____

Presenters in Committee: IGR Staff

Supporting Information.

Federal. Water Resources Reform and Development Act of 2013 (WRRDA). The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has released its WRRDA proposal. The proposal which historically has been enacted every two years is intended to provide oversight of and policy direction to the Army Corps of Engineers. If enacted the current proposal would be the first water resources legislation since 2007. The following link is to an overview presentation prepared by the committees of the bill.

<http://transportation.house.gov/sites/republicans.transportation.house.gov/files/images/FinancialWRRDABooklet.pdf> .

The bill has a provision pertaining to the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam. Section 129 (Upper Mississippi River Protection) of the bill outlines a process to determine its future operation. The section requires the Corps of Engineers within 180 days of the passage of WRRDA to conduct a study and submit to Congress a report on the impact of closing the lock and dam on the economy and environment including an assessment of the annual tonnage moving through the locks during the preceding five years. The legislation further states that if the study determines that the annual average tonnage moving through the locks in the preceding five years is not more than 1.5 million tons the Corps must close the lock and dam within one year of the passage of WRRDA. The section also permits the Corps to carry out emergency lock operations necessary to mitigate flood damage.

The House section is similar to the Upper Mississippi River Protection section (5021) in the Senate bill. It is possible that the House bill could be marked up by the Committee and sent to the House floor this year.

Federal. (FY) 2014 Appropriation Bills, Continuing Resolution, and Sequester. With the current fiscal year ending on September 30, Congress has begun efforts to provide funding for the federal government for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 which begins October 1. The Congress

will probably adopt a Continuing Resolution (CR) that would fund the federal government for up to one year. The level of funding is traditionally at the prior year's level but it is possible to adjust the funding level. The future of the sequester could also be determined during the negotiations between legislative leadership and the Administration.

Several members of the House majority have advocated that a budget agreement must include a repeal or delay of implementation of the Affordable Care Act. The advocates have indicated that if there is no action on the Affordable Care Act, they would not support a CR or similar move and as result there could be a federal government shutdown.

State of Minnesota. The Legislature met in a special session on Monday, September 9. Approximately 20 bills were introduced in the House and 35 were introduced in the Senate. Only one bill –disaster relief – was heard and enacted.

The disaster relief bill appropriated previously approved state funds for the local match required by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). The \$4.5 million for the June 2013 storms that caused damage in 18 counties including Hennepin was approved. The City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board have submitted damage estimates to the State and should be reimbursed for its storm associated costs. The City and Park Board submitted storm related costs that could be reimbursed by FEMA of \$1.1 million and \$1.6 million respectively. Approximately half of the city costs are attributed to sidewalk, curb and gutter replacement and repair.

While many of the introduced bills are either a repeal of a tax imposed (farm equipment, warehouse) or reinstates a tax exemption (telecommunications equipment), others proposed a permanent fund for the FEMA match (HF4), or SF 35 which requires the Commissioner of Transportation to increase public participation in decisions regarding highway noise abatement and interstate and state trunk highway projects.